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ODD ECHOES

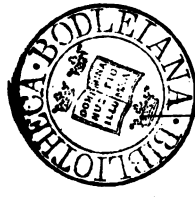
FROM OXFORD,

AND OTHER

HUMOROUS POEMS.

BY

A. MERION, B.A.



LONDON:
(*For the Author*)
JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN, PICCADILLY.
1872.

280. n. 390.

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THE TAILOR.

(After Edgar A. Poe.)

Once upon a morning dismal, as I smoked in blues abysmal,
Gazing at the curious patterns on the dressing-gown I wore,
While my cat her milk was lapping, suddenly there came a tapping,
Like a fellow's knuckles rapping, rapping at my chamber-door;
"It's that nuisance Smith," I muttered, "rapping at my chamber-door—
He may rap his fingers sore."

Ah! I do remember clearly small was then my income yearly,
And to pay my lodging nearly did my slight finances floor;
And my prospects, never sunny, fishy were as any tunny,
And I sadly wanted money, money to pay Baize and Blore,
Pay the fashionable tailors called in Oxford Baize and Blore,
Who will dun me evermore.

But my cat, prophetic pussy, now got ominously fussy,
Clawed me, pawed me with her talons as she'd never done before;
So that now to stay her terror and convince her of her error,
"Tabby," said I, "it is Smith entreating entrance at my door;
It's that feeble Smith demanding entrance at my chamber-door,
Only Smith and nothing more!"

Presently my chair removing and most seriously reproving
My grimalkin for the dreadful way in which she spat and swore,
From my writing-table's kneehole stole I softly to the wee hole
Which the people call the keyhole—keyhole of my chamber-door,
Peeping through it saw another eye the other side the door,
Looking at me—nothing more.

Straight to stop that sly eye's prying, to the key my lips applying,
Blew I such a puff of smoke as no man ever puffed before;
Then I heard him backward starting, rub his eye as if 'twere smarting,
And he seemed to be departing, so I whispered, "Is it sore?"
This I whispered through the keyhole; echo answered, "It is sore."
Answered thus, and nothing more.

Back I went and felt elated, and my blues had now abated,
When again I heard that rapping rather louder than before:
"Surely," said I, rising, "surely, if he thinks I'll sit demurely
While he makes that din securely, his mistake he shall deplore;
If I only catch him at it his misdeed he shall deplore—
He shall not annoy me more."

Open here I flung the portal, when there entered in a mortal,
Crooked-legged, with clothes too short all—seedy garments that he wore;
Never once "good-morning" bade me—not a bow or scrape he made me,
But upon my table laid me down a bill from Baize and Bore,
Took his stand upon the oilcloth just within my chamber-door,
Stood and hiccupped—nothing more.

Then this festive creature winning all my sad soul into grinning,
Such a visage idiotic I had never seen of yore;
"Well, you have been drinking brandy," said I, "and your legs are bandy,
And you hardly look a dandy, though you come from Baize and Blore;
Tell me what on earth your name is in the firm of Baize and Blore?"
Quoth the tailor, "Tick-no-more!"

Scarce I wondered this unsightly dun had answered unpolitely,
And his answer little comfort, little consolation bore;
For you cannot help confessing that it's surely not a blessing
When you find yourself addressing dun within your chamber-door;
Man or dun upon the oilcloth just within your chamber-door,
With a name like Tick-no-more.

But the tailor standing solus gave me like a bitter bolus
That one word, as if his vacant soul in that he did outpour;
Me with no fine words he buttered, this from time to time he stuttered,
Till I very softly muttered, "Other duns have been before;
They will give me further credit as my tradesmen have before;"
Then the dun said, "Tick-no-more!"

Startled that he spoke so flatly, and replied so very patly,
"Limited," I said, "it seems is his linguistic stock and store;
If of no more words he's master, if he duns not harder, faster,
Verily he'll bring disaster on the house of Baize and Blore,
And I shall remain indebted to the firm of Baize and Blore
For ever, evermore."

Still his strange demeanour winning all my sad soul into grinning,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned couch in front of oil-cloth, dun, and door;
Then upon the cushions sinking I betook myself to drinking
Little sips of sherry, thinking what this plague from Baize and Blore,
What this gloomy, greasy, groggy messenger from Baize and Blore
Meant by stuttering, "Tick-no-more."

But my cat I soothed by stroking, and small bits of bread kept soaking
In the milk, and gave them to her, dropped them for her on the floor:
Long I sat, strange things divining, with my head at ease reclining
Near the sherry I was wining that the dun's eye gloated o'er,
But the liquor I was wining with his green eyes gloating o'er
He shall taste, oh! nevermore.

Cloud by cloud the air grows denser, perfumed from
my meerschaum censer,
I should think I must have smoked of pipes that
morning half-a-score;
"Man," I said, "I have no treasure, or I'd pay the
bill with pleasure,
Only once more take my measure for a suit from
Baize and Blore,
Take your tape and take my measure for a suit from
Baize and Blore."
Quoth the tailor, "Tick-no-more!"

"Dun!" I cried, "inhuman creature, human still in
form and feature,
Much I've hoped you'd take my orders as you've
always done before;
Tell me—for although you're fuddled, you're not
utterly bemuddled—
Tell me if this hope I've cuddled is well-founded, I
implore;
Will they, will they give me credit? tell me clearly, I
implore?"
Quoth the tailor, "Tick-no-more!"

"Out!" I cried, "inhuman creature, human still in form and feature,
By the piper who performed for Moses in the days of yore,
Tell me won't, oh! brainless brute, your firm supply to me in future
Raiment of unequalled suture—genuine make of Baize and Blore,
Clothes of rare and radiant suture—splendid make of Baize and Blore?"
Quoth the tailor, "Tick-no-more!"

"Then be off, you sour curmudgeon!" cried I, starting up in dudgeon,
"Get you back to goose and scissors, get you back to Baize and Blore;
Leave no long account suggestive of reflections most unfestive,
Such as make me sleepless, restive—quit my chamber, quit my door;
Take your bill from off my table, take yourself from out my door!"
Quoth the tailor, "Tick-no-more!"

Thus the tailor dunned for payment for the raiment,
for the raiment
Mentioned in the bill he did not take from out my
chamber-door;
Thus he left me grimly staring, and that long account
up tearing,
Part went up the chimney flaring, part lay scattered on
the floor;
But that bill whose shreds went flying or lay scattered
on the floor
Now is settled evermore.

ODE TO THE LARGE BARMAID AT THE TAP.

Barmaid Titanic,
Oh! pardon the panic
That seized on my soul when I first saw your face;
For wild consternation,
And deep perturbation,
To feelings far other have long given place!

Now with eye of a critic,
Mid vapours mephitic,
That exhale from the liquors you vend in the bar,
My calm eyebrows under
I look up with wonder,
And think what a most unique creature you are!

Miss Fama, as stated
By Virgil,* was rated
A rather fast lady in times long ago ;
Her head went through cloudland,
Her feet walked on ploughed land ;
How she managed to do it I really don't know.

But one thing I'm sure of,
She did not procure of
Such lofty-heeled shoes as I've seen a large pair,
Just such as I chanced once
To spy as you danced once
Across the bar parlour and over a chair!

The daughters of Anak
No doubt had a gay knack
Of decking their hair, and would carefully trim
Their locks in sweet style up,
Yet did they not pile up
Pads and chignons like you to astound Anakim.

---

* "Fama, malum quo non aliud velocius ullum."
ÆNEID IV.

Vain, vain the contortions
By which those proportions
Of waist elephantine you strive to reduce!
Read Horace;* he'll show you
Most clearly that, though you
Fetter Nature in stays, she is sure to break loose.

My advice is this briefly:
I'd urge on you chiefly
That in dressing your locks the great Heidelberg tun,
You ought not to strive all
Your powers to rival;
Such a coiffure's not pleasing, and dangerous when done.

I'd caution you further
What risk of self-murther
You run if you will with such stringency clasp
Certain buckles or braces,
Or thingumbob laces,
Till your waist be the size of the waist of a wasp.

---

* "Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret."
EPIST. I.

For just as the slim* full-
blown poppy when brimful
Of rain-water droops to the ground its red cup,
And down in the dirt, you
Know, withers its virtue,
While its stalk breaks in two, or at least doubles up.

Or as a new meerschaum
(So called, but a dear sham),
Whose bowl is too heavy, whose stem is too slen-
der, snaps through and smashes,
As you tap out the ashes,
Smashes just where it cannot be mended again—

Just so you will copy
That pipe or that poppy;
You'll bend double, you'll break, you will fall, you
will snap
In two parts at the girdle,
Oh! it makes my blood curdle
To think what a loss that would be to the Tap.

---

* "Lassove papavera collo
Demisere caput pluviâ quum forte gravantur."
VIRG. ÆNEID IX.

THE DON OF ORIEL.

There went a don of Oriel,
Star of the staff tutorial,
In times most immemorial,
  To dine at Brasenose,
And there the juice beneficent
Of port, antique, magnificent,
In one hour and a jiffey sent
  His senses to repose.

Now buttery cats were squealing;
The midnight hour was pealing;
He left the gateway reeling;
  The Radcliffe loomed immense.
Pale moonlight showed him haggard,
As o'er the stones he staggered;
You might have called him blackguard,
  Just in the present tense.

Amid those feline wailings
To stay his footsteps' failings,
He seized upon the railings
That round the Radcliffe run;
And clinging to them, wary
Of letting go most chary,
He passed thy church, St. Mary,
Before the clock struck one.

Along All Souls he passed on,
And by the schools made haste on,
And so arrived at last on
The spot he started from;
He made (read with concern, all!)
Four times that tour nocturnal
Ere two of hours diurnal
Were told by Christ Church Tom.

In Brasenose a student,
Who spent the whole day ludent,
And read thus late, imprudent,
Looked forth into the night;

He watched with cachinnation,
And facial perturbation,
The don's perambulation,
  The star tutorial's plight.

He saw him catch and stumble,
And clutch and miss and fumble;
He heard him fume and grumble
  The street had got no end!
At last with joy decided
He saw relief provided,
And him policeman-guided
  Homeward his footsteps bend.

I've heard expressed a notion
That Alma Mater's motion,
Though not result of potion,
  Is like that of the don;
And Union spouters proving
That she is always moving
A circle or a groove in,
  And never does get on;

Till the policeman national
Detects her course irrational,
And comes down with a crash on all
  Her antiquatedness;
Sends, spite of "your petitioners,"
A dozen Royal Commissioners,
Of old ways abolitioners,
  To force her to progress.

WHAT IS LOVE?

"Love! what is love?" I asked an innocent child,
Who sucked some compound dire the while he dinned
Wild music from a broken drum. He smiled
Broader and broader till at length he grinned,
Gave to each finger an elaborate lick,
And said, "I love, I love—dis treacle stick."

"Love! what is love?" I asked a well-breeched
youth,
Over whose head ten summers might have rolled;
Upon his brow seemed stamped the mark of truth.
He looked at me, and answered frank and bold,
And wished he might be hanged, and dashed, and
blowed,
And botheration take him if he knowed.

"Love! what is love?" I asked a new-wed bride.
"Oh!" said she, "it is soft emotion's flow;
It's mutual affection's gushing tide;
It is a foretaste given us here below
Of rapture and of bliss that is above.
Love is my William, and my William love."

"Love! what is love?" I asked a careworn soul,
Who was belabouring his spouse with a cudgel,
And she was culling from his tristful poll
Handfuls of hair. "Love!" cried he, "it is fudge all!
But have you eyes, and do you ask of me?
Why, drat the dreaming bachelor! can't he see?"

THE SUPPER OF THE FOUR.

(After Edgar A. Poe.)

Remiges quinque a Nunehamo reversi in Ricardi hospitis cœnaculum intrant, ex quibus quidam sic loquitur :

"Ah! 'pon my word, you fellows, I'm as tired as I was ever!
For supper shout, and let the scout know we're come from the river;
And a cushion quick! a cushion, Dick, give now or nevermore,
For on this bare cane-bottomed chair I will not sit: I'm sore.
Come let the mackerel soused be brought, the pigeon-pie, the tongue,
The cider-cup and straws, and let the radishes be young;
Oh! William, bring the radishes, and, William, bring them young."

Cui speculator.

"Commons for five, sir, pigeon-pie, I'm ordered to provide,
And beer as usual, I suppose, and cider-cup beside.
The mackerel soused, sir, shall be brought, and ham, and lamb, and tongue,
And potted meats, and salad too, and radishes, sir, young;
I'll get them if I can, and, sir, I'll try to get them young."

Horrendâ post cœnam voce cantantes cæteros sic excipit Ricardus hospes:

"Cœnavimus; but howl not thus: let our Noachian song
Float on the air so tunefully the dean may feel no wrong."

Noachii carminis epitome:

"St. James's Park received the ark on its primeval tide,*
All creatures wild thereto beguiled were stabled safe inside;

* "Old Father Noah, he built him an ark,
And set it afloat in St. James's Park, &c."—SONG.

By ones, by pairs, they mount the stairs, they mount by threes and fours,
Fowls came from perches, beasts from lairs, and thronged about the doors
By five, by six, by seven, by eight, by nine, by ten, by scores."

Tum solito hilarior factus hospes olim tristissimus exclamat:

"Hurrah! to-night my heart is light! no blues I'll conjure up,
But drown the demons out of sight in a draught of cider-cup;
We'll drain it dry, then let us try to soothe our temperate mirth,
The comfort of post-prandial pipe, ere each one seek his berth,
May health to all our friends and bane to all our foes be given!"

Propinant omnes.

Now for the pipe and then to sleep, like to the sleepers seven,
From toil and boose to snore and snooze sound as the sleepers seven.

THE WHOLE HOG.

There was a youth who'd pondered much,
  And come to the conclusion,
That all things here beneath the moon
  Are but a vain delusion.
So he went in for the total hog,
  The short life and the merry,
Laid in a stock of strong cigars,
  And ran a bill for sherry.

In soft armchair behold him now
  Luxuriously reclining,
With half a score of other fools
  All smoking and all wining,
While as he puffs with listless eyes,
  His clouds of smoke uprising,
His cogitations shape themselves
  In such soliloquising:

"All hail tobacco! weed maligned,
Since you were roundly cursed,
And in a royal counterblast
Blown up by James the First.

"To hear such bigots rave and vent
On you their pious spleen,
One might suppose that e'en hot Nick
Must be in Nicotine.

"Wine's often apt to turn the head,
And turn the stomach too,
And cards are scarcely pleasant when
You're losing fast at loo.

"Tobacco will not treat you so,
And spill you from your chair,
He will not empty out your purse,
And fill you full of care.

"So when all things go well with me,
And quiet is the world,
'Tis thus I lie and watch my wreaths
Of fragrant smoke upcurled.

"And when the world goes wrong with me,
With troubles when oppressed,
Of all the antidotes for blues
The peaceful pipe is best.

"Now pass the bottle round again,
And fill me up once more;
Libations, Baccy, unto thee
For ever let me pour."

Thus far the youth: then sudden stopped,
And sighed, for now indeed he
Began to feel all over him
Sensations queer and seedy.
The room ran round; in dizzy maze
The walls and pictures flew;
And where before one lamp he saw,
There now seemed dancing two.

Three moments brief he sat and stared,
Now paling and now flushing,
Then from his chair rose like a ghost,
And to the coal-box rushing,

Poured many a full libation out
  With quick convulsive motion,
Such as from steamboats qualmish souls
  Pour to the troubled ocean.

Long time he lay and rolled his eyes
  Like ducks in thunder dying;
Hours came and went, and still all night
  He tossed, lamenting, sighing:
"Oh dear! if this is the total hog,
  For me he's much too big;
It's clear that I can only go
  A very little pig."

So this gay youth he pondered more,
  And reached a new conclusion,
That, after all, this mortal world
  Is real and no delusion.
He left off going the total hog,
  The short life and the merry,
Sold off his stock of strong cigars,
  And paid his bill for sherry.

THE UNDERGRAD.

(After Tennyson.)

His fists across his breast he laid,
  He was more mad than words can say;
Bareheaded rushed the Undergrad
  To mingle in November's fray.
In cap and gown a don stepped down
  To meet and greet him on his way;
"It is no wonder," said his friends,
  "He has been drinking half the day."

All black and blue, like cloud and skies,
  Next day that proctor's face was seen;
Bruised were his eyebrows, bruised his eyes,
  Bruised was his nose and pummelled mien.
So dire a case, such black disgrace,
  Since Oxford was had never been;
That Undergrad took change of air
  At the suggestion of the dean.

TO MY SCOUT.

After a Smash (and Tennyson.)

Break, break, break!
  Plate, and decanter, and glass!
It's enough to worry a cherub,
  And loosen the tongue of an ass.
It's all very well to declare
  That your "helbow" caught in the door,
And your "fut" must 'ave 'itched in a nail,
  And you're very sorry, you're sure.
And I'm very hard up just now,
  Three troublesome duns to stop,
But I wish I'd only got half the coin
  I've paid to that china-shop.
Break, break, break!
  You must order another new set.
It's good for trade; but I'd like to know
  What is the commission* you get?

---

* Certain tradesmen at Oxford allow college servants a commission on orders brought to them.

TO THE SAME AT BREAKFAST.

(After Longfellow.)

Don't tell me in cheerful numbers
  That the jug is full of cream!
For the milkman's conscience slumbers,
  And things are not what they seem!

THE WALLFLOWERS.

(After Longfellow.)

Two belated men from Oxford,
Members of a nameless college—
Pip, the philosophic smoker,
And his friend they called the Fluffer—
Men belated in the country,
Lost their way geologising;
Reached the city after midnight,
After lawful hour of entry,
By the gateway of the college.
And they did not rouse the porter,
For they knew the dean was wrathful,
And had vowed a weighty vengeance
If a man knocked in belated.
  But they gat them round a back way,
Where a wall divides the college

From intrusion of the vulgar.
Stole they down a lonely footpath,
And they halted where a sapling
Very near the wall was growing;
And above an ancient elm-tree
Stretched a downward arm in welcome
To embrace the little sapling.
  Each in turn his toe adapted
Where a crevice in the stonework,
In the worn and ancient stonework,
Gave a short precarious foothold
While they climbed the little sapling.
Pip had scaled the wall, and, sitting,
Helped the Fluffer struggling upwards,
When a Bobby, a policeman,
Irreproachable policeman,
Came upon them round the corner,
And remarked, "Gents, I have caught you;
You're a pretty pair of wallflowers!"
Then the Fluffer answered briefly,
Answered, "Bobby, you have caught us,"
And the careful Pip, the smoker,

From his seat upon the wall-top,
Echoed, "I believe you've caught us."
But the Bobby, the policeman,
Said, "I have not seen you do it—
Seen you over any wall get;
And perhaps I should not see you,
If I happened to be looking
In an opposite direction,
With my back turned right upon you."
Nothing further said the Bobby,
Irreproachable policeman,
Only grinned, and seemed to linger.
Quick then Pip pulled up the Fluffer,
And inquired, "Old fellow, Fluffer,
Have you any coin about you?"
And the Fluffer from his pockets
Brought the bob, the silver shilling,
And the piece of six, the tizzy,
And the piece of four, the joey,
And the double bob, the florin.
Down he threw them on the pathway;
Then the Bobby, the policeman,

Picked them up, and whispered softly,
Somebody had dropped some money,
He was lucky to have found it.
After that did Pip, the smoker,
And his friend they called the Fluffer,
Get across the wall securely;
But the Bobby, the policeman,
Irreproachable policeman,
Did not see them get across it;
For he happened to be looking
In an opposite direction,
And his back was turned upon them.

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S SQUINT.

"SCHOOLMASTER, give me, pray, a hint,
What is the reason that you squint?
Your right eye stares straight, fierce, and full,
As visual organ of a bull;
Your left asserts, to earthward thrown,
An independence of its own,
And like a half-set sun lies hid,
Half-covered by its lower lid.
The one so wondrous large and big is,
The other small as eye of pig is.
But when I knew you long ago
Your eyes were not distorted so.
O! master, give me, pray, a hint,
And tell the reason why you squint."

"To keep in awe unruly boys
My right eye's utmost power employs.
All day it glares stern and severe,
Like eye of Ancient Marinere;
It holds the quailing class in thrall,
And order reigns from wall to wall.
Meanwhile my left eye's downward look
Is fixed on papers, desk, and book.
At first I found it hard to do,
But by degrees the habit grew;
And now for ever, fast as flint
Is fixed these orbs' divergent squint."

A VALENTINE.

WHAT? lady, did they really say
  That you're a perfect fright?
So will not I; I would not be
  So *truly* unpolite.

TO L. P. ON TAKING HIS DEGREE.

(After Shakspeare, in "Cymbeline.")

Fear no more the voice of the don,
Nor the oft-cut tutor's rages,
Thou thy Oxford course hast run,
And art numbered with the sages.
All Oxford men, it's my belief,
Must graduate or come to grief.

Fear no more the snarl of the sub.,*
Thou art past that tyrant's stroke.
No more buttery, beer, and grub,
No more rows with sported oak!
Even X—— himself, it's my belief,
Must graduate or come to grief!

---

* Sub-Warden, Sub-Rectors, &c.

Fear no more the bull-dog's dash,
  Nor pursuing proctor's tone.
Fear not rustication rash,
  Thou art now a graduate grown!
All we, like thee, it's my belief,
Must do the same or come to grief!

No dun's accountant harm thee!
No ugly woman charm thee!
Tick unpaid forbear thee!
Never bill come near thee!
Prosper, flourish, gain renown,
Ere you take the master's gown!

JOHN FLINN'S EPITAPH.

—— *Si linguæ centum sint, oraque centum*
Ferrea vox !

John Flinn about the noon of life
Screwed up his courage, took a wife;
But from the day he wed Miss Cloggs,
His life was worse than any dog's.
Far fewer brains had Dinah got
Than fall to other women's lot;
Impartial Nature, compensating,
Had given her wondrous skill in rating,
Granted stentorian powers of lung,
Unwearying jaw and vigorous tongue.
Continually her voice snarled on,
Abusing, scolding, threatening John:
All day she brawled, all night she nagged,
She never tired and never flagged.

Thin by degrees and pale he grew,
And underneath his eyes was blue;
The hair upon his head turned grey,
And still got scantier every day.
At last he took to bed, and there
Close by his side she placed her chair.
The neighbours came to say farewell;
His griefs the poor soul dare not tell.
Only he said: "Oh! neighbours mine,
What ails me thus ye may divine.
In ancient times strong Samson slew
A thousand men—a feat to do!
And fate like theirs is mine to-day;
Solve me this riddle, neighbours, pray."
He said: he shook his head, he sighed,
He gasped, he guggled, and he died.
The neighbours buried him, and put
Stone at the head and at the foot.
These simple words they graved to show
What end he met who lay below:
"John Flinn lies here beneath the grass,
Slain by the jawbone of an ass."

HOW TO SLEEP SOUNDLY.

FAST asleep he lay,
  And they could not wake him;
Vain it was to shout,
  Vain to pinch and shake him.
Trumpets in his ear
  Blew they, made a bustle,
Yet he did not stir,
  Did not move a muscle.
Fifty cats they fetched,
  Awful caterwaulers;
Fifty babies too,
  Warranted loud squallers;
Sixty German bands,
  Sixty hurdy-gurdies,
And the din they made
  Was a "cautio surdis."

They in doing thus
  Were mistaken grossly,
On he slept in spite,
  Soundly, comatosely.
But at last they brought
  From a ranter's chapel,
Boanerges Bigg,
  With the case to grapple.
Boanerges was
  Styled a local preacher,
All his words he blew
  Through his nasal feature:
Boanerges was
  Styled a preacher local,
And on heaven and earth,
  Sea and sky did so call
That in forty winks
  He aroused the sleeper;
Would have roused him too,
  Had he slept much deeper.
After brandy neat
  Friends had made him toss off, he

Said, "I took up 'Pro-
verbial Philosophy,'
And I tried to read
That book after supper;
This was the result.
Author's name is Tupper."

TEETOTALLERS' LOGIC.

MAJOR PREMISE.

THOSE who drink the smallest drop
  Of liquor alcoholic,
Are doomed, as sure as eggs are eggs,
  To tortures diabolic.
Whoever takes a glass or two
  Has need of my monition,
He's going by the straighest route
  To out and out perdition.
For one who drinks his half-a-pint
  Yet more and more will drink, sir,
That when he's had enough he'll stop, 's
  Improbable I think, sir.
He'll swill and swill till he's a sot,
  And gets delirium tremens;
And after that I need not prove
  He's booked for all the demons.

MINOR PREMISE.

Smith, Brown, and Jones are working men,
And when the day is done, sir,
Discuss a quart of measure short,
But never more than one, sir.

CONCLUSION.

Therefore both Smith, and Brown, and Jones,
Have need of my monition,
Because they're going, sure as eggs,
The straight way to perdition.
Though now they take a little drop,
Yet more and more they'll swill, sir;
D' you think they'll stop when they've enough?
Oh no! they never will, sir,
They'll drain their pots till they are sots,
And get delirium tremens,
Then down they'll go, and there below
They'll hob-nob with the demons.

SERVE HIM RIGHT.

In Two Fyttes.

FYTTE I.—HOW I ESCAPED.

You call me sour old bachelor,
  And ask, "Why am I so?"
Well, listen to a tale I'll tell
  Of twenty years ago,
When I was very nearly caught
  In matrimonial ties;
Why such was not my dismal lot
  Now hearken and be wise.

Let me confess in verdant youth
  I was, like others, gay;
According as the proverb says,
  Each puppy has his day—

Like other proverbs, half the truth,
  For if I judge aright,
Wild nocturn caterwaulings tell
  That each cat has his night.

I loved a lady long ago,
  Fair, young, and rich was she,
And 'twould be but the truth if I
  Declared that she loved me.
Her "dear papa" was pleased for her
  My offer to receive,
And "dear ma" thought me quite a catch
  I really do believe.

But woe is me—that is, I mean,
  I met with a mishap:
Dame Fortune, as the poets say,
  Expelled me from her lap.
Her "dear pa" was an Englishman,
  Bluff, portly, kind, and hearty,
And in the fulness of his heart
  Would give a little party.

I was invited, and beside
  Some thirty-six or more,
And danced—St. Vitus! how I danced!—
  Until my feet were sore,
For I danced with my intended,
  And said soft things in her ear,
Till oh, my heart! adown her cheek
  There stole a smiling tear.

She'd left her handkerchief upstairs;*
  To fetch it I was sent,
While the party all across the hall
  To eat their supper went.
I soon secured the precious rag,
  And kissed it o'er and o'er,
Then hasting to rejoin my love,
  Rushed madly through the door.

A sneaking housemaid with her pails
  Was slowly passing by,
And right against her heedlessly—
  Sing sorrow! did I fly.

* 'Cording to the top-ography of this house, the drawin'-room where they was dancing was up-stairs, eh?—P.'s D.

Down went the maid, and down went I,
  And down came pails and all,
Down came the banisters and lamp
  Into the darkened hall.

My lady love all innocence
  Was waiting me below,
And near her crashed the broken lamp,
  And near with screams and woe
That yelling housemaid fell, and then—
  Alas! my courage fails—
Then on her head—it must be said—
  Were poured out both the pails.

Out rushed the guests, and in their hands
  The candles flickered dim;
Behind them came her "dear papa;"
  His face was red and grim.
He seized me by the collar, and
  My best dress-shirt he tore;
He shook me as a dog a rat,
  And kicked me through the door!

Then I was sorely grieved, but now
  I think it did me good,
For since that I've enjoyed myself,
  As ne'er before I could.
A bachelor's life's the only life
  Worth living for at all.
A wife's best black may help to weave
  Her husband's funeral pall.

Ye who are married must be still,
  So live and love till death;
But to the single I say "Don't,"
  As *Punch* so wisely saith.
Now this the little moral is
  I'll fix unto my tale:
Don't marry, and don't hurry, and
  Don't spill the housemaid's pail.

FYTTE II.—CAUGHT AT LAST.

Oh! listen all, both great and small,
  To what I've been and done;
I that before so stoutly swore
  That I would marry none.

Confounded be that scheming she!
  Confound that little ring!
Confound myself whose love of pelf
  Did all this bother bring.

Yes, pity me, for I am he,
  The very man who shaped
In happier day that joyful lay
  That told "How I escaped."
But now I've been most sadly green;
  I'm married to a wife;
But such a "do" I never knew—
  No, never in my life.

For some time by housekeepers I
  Was fain to be content
To manage the domestic part
  Of my establishment.
But there was always something wrong;
  Such rows from morn to night,
That I concluded I must get
  A spouse to set things right.

Now there was a maiden lady (oh!)
  Who lived across the road;
In fact, she lived just opposite
  The house where I abode.
She had eight hundred pounds a year,
  As very well I knew,
So to myself I said, "I think
  This lady just will do."

Oh, what an ass I made myself
  When I began to court!
I used to call her angel, though
  Both ugly, fat, and short;
Her poodle dogs, tom-cats, and she's,
  For nothing came amiss,
In the depth of my devotion to
  My dearest, I would kiss.

The week after we were married I
  Was standing at my door,
When there trotted up a waggonette,
  And stopped my gate before.

Eight children tumbled out, and cried,
"Oh, here's our new papa!"
"How now?" said I. "You little scamps,
I don't know who you are."

Out rushed my newly-wedded bride,
And kissed each wretched child.
Oh, sirs! I turned as pale as death;
My heart was throbbing wild,
When she coolly said, "Adolphus, here's
Our family, you see.
Ah, what a happy circle, dear
Adolphus, we shall be!"

"A—what? a—what? *Our* family?"
(For I could scarcely speak).
"My dear, you must be joking; we've
Been married but a week!"
"Ha! ha!" she laughed; "you playful man;
My husband who is dead
Is the father of these dear ones, who
By you must now be fed."

Then the children laughed in concert like
  Young demons, "Ha! ha! ha!
Oh, isn't this a jolly sell
  For our dear new papa?"
"Keep up your pecker, pa," cried one,
  "And keep your temper down."
Another said he thought that pa
  Was done "uncommon brown."

At last I answered, "Madam, well,
  You've got me unawares,
I wish I'd known beforehand the
  Real state of your affairs.
Never mind, with this reflection I'll
  Contrive myself to cheer,
That I've got, besides eight children, your
  Eight hundred pounds a year."

Again she laughed and ran to me,
  And kissed me on the cheek,
And said to me, "You darling man,
  How simply you *do* speak!

"For 'twas only settled on me by
That husband who is dead,
As long as I stay single, and
I lose it when I wed."

As a general rule in what I say
Most scrupulous I am,
And my demeanour is most meek
And quiet as a lamb.
But then I must acknowledge that
I quite forgot propriety,
And said some things folks never say,
At least in good society.

A sort of scrimmage then ensued,
I scarce remember how;
I only know Susanna's nails
Ploughed furrows in my brow.
I rather think that in my rage
I seized her by the hair,
I know a monstrous wig came off
Her shining head, and bare!

I tore it into atoms and
  I threw it in her face,
And ran as fast as I could go
  From that detested place,
Embarked on board a vessel for
  Australia that was bound,
And after four months' voyage I
  Arrived there safe and sound.

One day when I'd been there a month
  I sauntered out to see
The vessels in the harbour, and
  I strolled along the quay,
When I heard a well-known voice cry out,
  "I'm safe, Adolphus dear!
And I've left the children sitting by
  The luggage on the pier."

Human nature couldn't stand it,
  So with a desperate bound
I sprang into the water with
  Intention to be drowned.

"Fifty guineas to whoever brings
  Him out alive!" she cried;
And in half a minute more a boat
  Had rowed up close beside.

A sailor caught me by my hair
  And pulled me nearly in,
When gliding through the water was
  Espied a long black fin.
"A shark!" they yelled; it made a rush,
  And seized me by the calf,
A horrid crush of bones ensued—
  My leg was bit in half!

I paid that fifty guineas down,
  I got another leg;
Ten thousand pardons for the past
  I was obliged to beg.
Now as I write my tale of woe
  I tremble like a kitten;
I know there'll be another row
  When SHE reads what I've written.

MORAL.

Of widows, then, beware, young men,
  And never be so rash,
For money's sake a wife to take
  Whose only virtue's cash.
Take my advice, look sharp and "splice,"
  For every mortal man
Should make his hay on sunny day,
  And marry while he can.

Young ladies, too, I'd counsel you
  Never your ears to stop,
But hear their prayer when lovers dare
  The question great to pop;
Lest by your scorn they get forlorn,
  And take to suicide,
And leave you lone through life to moan
  You never were a bride!

1865.

A FAREWELL,

After Sleeping in —— Hotel (and Tennyson.)

Bite on, thou pertinacious flea,
  And draw the tiny river;
No more for thee my blood shall be,
  For ever and for ever.
Bite, fiercely bite, and take with glee
  From each unwilling giver;
No food for thee my blood shall be,
  For ever and for ever.
And here will toss some wretched he,
  And here he'll tear and shiver;
Bed-making she will hunt the flea
  For ever and for ever.

A thousand limbs may smart for thee,
  A thousand skins may quiver;
But not for thee my blood shall be,
  For ever and for ever.

THE AMIABLE DUN.

A FRAGMENT.

(AFTER TENNYSON.)

AT breakfast-time he comes and stands,
He puts his paper in your hands,
He hums and haws, with "ifs" and "ands."

His hands he laves with unseen soaps,*
Thanks you for nothing, says he hopes,
Then bows, "Good morning, sir:" he slopes.

---

* "Washing his hands with invisible soap
In imperceptible water."—HOOD.

THE CURSE OF THE MUSES.

A PAGE OF (FUTURE) OXFORD HISTORY.

To a library in Oxford came,
  But not to the Bodleian,
Apollo called the Belvidere,
  And Venus Medicean.

Four students went to view—they were
  Aristocratic scions,
Set learning, laws, and letters, and
  Æsthetics at defiance.

They came, they saw, and they resolved;
  Said they, "We will, between us,
Do for Apollo Belvidere
  And Medicean Venus.

They dragged them into quad. at night,
  And chopped them into mince-meat;
A perfect joke they voted it,
  And sport for any prince meet.

The fragments next they burned to dust
  Upon a pyre funereal,
Interred the dust in coal-boxes—
  It was a classic burial.

The Muses looked, and shrieked with rage,
  With rage the Graces quivered;
And thus their curse upon the four
  Iconoclasts delivered:

"Since ye destroyed the perfect type
  Of god, and man, and woman,
Ye shall become more hideous
  Than any being human.

"Not Rachel's art shall e'er restore
  A single grace of feature,
And ye shall be for evermore
  Abhorred of every creature."

Four scouts came up to summon them
  Before a college meeting;
They fell in fits before they'd time
  To give their masters greeting.

Two dons in wrath to fetch them came,
  Stern venerable clerics;
But at the sight of them went off
  In violent hysterics.

The art professor saw: his brains
  Became as soft as batter,
Grew softer, softer, till he was
  As mad as any hatter.

Even the bold vice-chancellor
  At sight of them skedaddled;
He was too late; from that day forth
  His head was slightly addled.

Where'er they went the people fled,
  And dogs set up a howling;
The cats began to spit and swear
  When they came near them prowling.

At last there grew such discontents,
  Complaints, and public shindies,
The four were packed in boxes, and
  Shipped off to the West Indies.

A storm arose: "The ship," said Jack,
  "Of Jonah let us lighten,
And heave them out, to see if sharks
  As well as men they'll frighten."

They heaved: the storm became a calm,
  But it's an open question,
Whether or no, soon after that,
  Four sharks had indigestion.

THE GREAT BEEYUGEE; OR, THE ORIGIN OF MAN.

In the days when earth was empty rolled a planetary world,
Which by some mishap celestial on another world was hurled,
And was smashed into a million "moss-grown" bits of aërolites
(See address of Thompson, first of British scientific wights).*

---

* "We must regard it as probable in the highest degree that there are countless seed-bearing meteoric stones moving about space. The hypothesis that life originated on this earth from moss-grown fragments of the ruins of another world may seem wild and visionary: it is not unscientific."—*Inaugural Address of Sir W. Thompson, President of the British Association, Edinburgh, August,* 1871.

All the creatures living on it perished in that awful shock,
All except a great Beeyugee, clinging to a piece of rock;
Forty million miles a second did that ark-like fragment fall,
Till it fell on the primeval surface of this earthly ball.

Evermore he wandered o'er it, and he felt his spirits sink,
When upon his isolation sadly he began to think.
He had neither nipped nor bitten, he had neither seen nor heard,
Any other living being, man or beast, or fish or bird.

Sternly standing on his hind legs, he apostrophised the sun,
As the poet Campbell's Last Man is imagined to have done:
"You and I, proud sun, are brothers: we are twins in loneliness,
Of the walk you're cock up yonder, so am I down here, I guess.

"It is well for you to be so, dull and inorganic mass,
Whether 'tis of atmosphere or solid matter dense and crass;
What you are the folks can only guess by peeping through a prism,
But they well know I'm an active, able, living organism.

"Also I'm a social being—you are obviously not;
I can never be contented with a lone sequestered lot;
You would never murmur though you ranged alone for a quintillion
Times a myriad myriad cycles, and a billion times a billion.

Sadly I remember past joys, such as I no longer feel,
And I see no future prospect of a single decent meal;
Torn from my fond Beeyugee-ess and my little Beeyugees,
How on earth shall I exist here? Proud sun, answer if you please."

Whether these remarks attracted an aërolite from space,
Or some other cause produced it, is a thing I cannot trace;
Scarce the Beeyugee had spoken—'tis the merest fact I tell—
From the skies another "moss-grown fragment" close beside him fell.

And upon it there came riding, riding safe and riding free,
All the great Beeyugee's kindred, whom he thought no more to see;
Oh! the greeting of that meeting, cause indeed for admiration,
That the earth was so supplied with her primordial population!

Now, you Wranglers, hear a statement which will strike your science dumb,
Thus by Beeyugees on earth was done the first addition sum;
They were first arithmeticians, with themselves themselves allying,
Were the first terrestrial creatures who could manage multiplying.

But as they went on increasing transformations strange
were seen,
And descendants hardly seemed like what their ancestors had been;
Next a series of dissensions, long divisions there ensued,
And a sort of civil war among the Beeyugeeish brood.

Then the stronger killed the weaker, and in turn themselves were killed,
And continual evolution all the world with new forms filled;
On from that first Great Beeyugee animal existence ran,
Till at last it culminated in the lordly shape of man.

Man, "the heir of all the ages," may forget his low descent,
Or on modern doctrines of his genesis his mirth may vent:
Lest he should in pride of reason think there's really no connection,
Beeyugees refresh themselves while they refresh his recollection.

THE SWELL'S LAMENT.

At my dooah one fine mawning there came a light
knock,
Which thent thwough my nerveth quite a thwill and a
thock,
When thome one thaid, "Boy, thir, ith born, and bleth
it, oh!
He'th hith pa'th vewy image—identical ditto."

I'm a wegular thwell, I am fully awaah;
Handthome featureth, fine whithkerth—magnifithent
haar;
My figure ith faultleth; my nothe, too! why, no man
Evah thaw thuch a thpethimen of the twue Woman.*

---

* Roman.

I thould nevah have thought that a party would tell a
Fib, thaying a fellah'th kid wath like a fellah,
And rethembled his papa ath much ath two peath,
When the two diffah much more than chalk doeth from
cheethe.

I looked at the baby and thaid. "Why, my deah,
Don't you think it'th an infant wemarkably queeah?
It'th nothe ith tho pug, and like old Uncle Ned
It'th got not a haar on the top of it'th head.

I feel in my thwoat an unuthual gulp,
When I thee thith—what Huthxley callth—math* of
wed pulp;
Am I mad, am I dweaming, or what can it be?
Did they weally obtherve that the boy ith like me?"

Then my wife thaid, "Be quiet, you thtoopid thing, do,
And kith him thith inthtant, or I won't kith you;
You didn't quite catch what the nurthe thaid it may be,
For if he'th not like you, you are jutht like a baby."

---

* "One mass of red pulp is much like another."—HUXLEY ON BABIES.

WE PAUSE FOR A REPLY.

(SUGGESTED BY A SKETCH IN THE "GRAPHIC.")

"PRAY, Mr. Stycke, of No-man's Hall,
Can you inform us why
Augustus was no gentleman?
We pause for a reply."

That undergraduate upraised
His eyeglass to his eye;
Again in blandest tones was heard,
"We pause for a reply."

He crossed his knees and clasped his hands,
And heaved a hopeless sigh;
The suave examiner remarked,
"We pause for a reply."

Nervous perhaps was Mr. Stycke;
It might be he was shy;
Therefore quoth that examiner,
"We pause for a reply."

Away, away, wool-gathering,
His wits appeared to fly,
And still said that examiner,
"We pause for a reply."

He stammered, but no answer came;
It seemed in vain to try;
And though they paused, and paused again,
They could get no reply.

He left the schools; he asked his friends,
"D' you know the reason why?"
"Because he once thrashed Ann Tony,"
Said they; "that's the reply."

He sent his scout up to the schools.
Quoth he, "Go fetch me my
Testamur." Then he twirled his thumbs,
And paused for a reply.

The scout went up, the scout came down,
  And sadly said, "Sir, I
Have asked the clerk; he shook his head,
  And gave me no reply."

THE TRINITY NIGHTINGALE.

(Comic Aldrich, Page 7, Example 4.)

"LAST night in our gardens the nightingale sang,
And the lime-walk with wonderful melody rang;
And they say if you listen this evening at ten,
You'll be likely to hear the performance again."

After dark, then, the whole population of Trinity
Flocked to hear the discourse of the feathered divinity,
And the punctual bird, just at ten by the chimes,
Sent a sweet prelude echoing far through the limes.

It sang and it twittered, it thrilled and it trilled,
And the souls of the hearers with harmony filled;
When it paused, with suspense sentimental men grew
sick,
And longed for some more of the ravishing music.

No cigar might be lit, lest a puff of the smoke
Should cause the invisible songster to choke;
And when a man ventured to utter a word,
It was, "Sh-sh-sh-sh, or you'll frighten the bird."

Invisible songster! where could the bird be?
There were dozens of eyes vainly straining to see.
At last from a window a voice came which said,
"The nightingale's tired, and is going to bed.

"A glass of pure water see, gentlemen, here,
Which accounts for his notes being liquid and clear;
Here's the quill that he piped with, and now you may
guess
That the fine old cock nightingale's only T. S."

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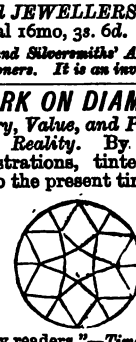

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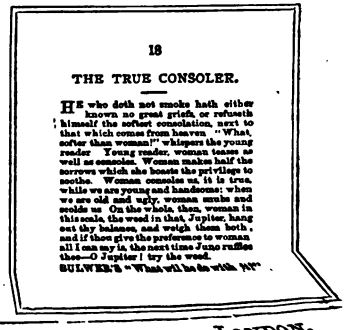

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